In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

Claim 1 (original) A method of identifying a fetal cell in a maternal blood sample, the method comprising detecting a maternal antibody bound to a fetal cell.

Claim 2 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises exposing the maternal antibody bound to a fetal cell to an agent capable of forming a complex with the maternal antibody.

Claim 3 (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the agent is detectably labelled.

Claim 4 (original) The method of claim 3, wherein the label is used to detect the fetal cell-maternal antibody complex.

Claim 5. (original) A method of identifying a fetal cell in a sample, the method comprising exposing cells in the sample to maternal antibodies, and detecting a maternal antibody bound to a fetal cell, wherein the maternal antibodies comprise maternally produced antibodies specific for paternally-inherited fetal antigens.

Claim 6. (original) The method according to claim 5, wherein the maternal antibodies are prepared by a process comprising dissociation of antibodies from a complex with a soluble HLA antigen and/or an anti-idiotypic antibody.

Claim 7. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 ~~or 6~~, wherein the method further comprises exposing the maternal antibody bound to a fetal cell to an agent capable of forming a complex with the maternal antibody.

Claim 8. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims ~~2 to~~ 7, wherein the agent is an antibody or antibody fragment.

Claim 9. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims ~~2 to~~ 7, wherein the agent is a polypeptide that binds to an immunoglobulin.

Claim 10. (original) The method of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of: protein A, protein G and protein L.

Claim 11. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 7~~2 to 10~~, wherein the agent is detectably labelled.

Claim 12. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the label on the agent is used to detect the fetal cell-maternal antibody complex.

Claim 13. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~11 or~~ 12, wherein the label is selected from the group consisting of: a fluorescent label, a radioactive label, a paramagnetic particle, a chemoluminescent label, an enzymatic label ~~that is detectable by virtue of a secondary enzymatic reaction~~, and a label that is detectable by ~~virtue of~~ binding to a molecule.

Claim 14. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the label is a paramagnetic particle and wherein the step of detecting the fetal cell-maternal antibody complex comprises exposing the cells bound by agent-maternal antibody complexes to a magnet.

Claim 15. (original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the label is a fluorescent label and wherein the step of detecting the fetal cell-maternal antibody complex performing fluorescence activated cell sorting.

Claim 16. (currently amended) A method of enriching fetal cells from a maternal blood sample, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

i) isolating a fraction comprising peripheral blood mononuclear cells from the sample;

ii) contacting the fraction ~~at i)~~ with an antibody from a maternal blood sample under conditions allowing~~sufficient to permit~~ maternally produced antibodies specific for paternally-inherited fetal antigens to bind fetal cells in the fraction;

iii) contacting the fetal cells bound to maternal antibodies ~~complexed cells from ii)~~ with an agent capable of forming a complex with maternal antibodies; and

iv) recovering fetal cells bound to agent-maternal antibody complexes.

Claim 17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein i) further comprises removing antibodies bound to cell surface antigens from the cells or removing antigen-antibody complexes from the cells.

Claim 18. (currently amended) The method according to claim 16~~ or 17~~, wherein cells in the fraction comprising peripheral blood mononuclear cells ~~at i) of claim 16~~ are at least partially purified before being contacted with the antibody.

Claim 19. (currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the fraction ~~at i) of claim 16~~ is depleted of a least one type of maternal cell ~~type~~.

Claim 20. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16~~ to 19~~, wherein the fetal antigen-reactive antibodies obtained from the maternal blood sample are~~have been~~ prepared by dissociation from a complex with a soluble HLA antigen and/or an anti-idiotypic antibody.

Claim 21. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16~~ to 20~~, wherein ii) and iii) of claim 16 are performed under conditions in which the complement lysis pathway does not ~~or cannot~~ function.

Claim 22. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16~~ to 21~~, wherein the peripheral blood mononuclear cells are cultured *in vitro* before the fraction is contacted with maternally produced antibodies.~~step ii) of claim 16 is performed.~~

Claim 23. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16 ~~to 22~~, wherein the agent is bound to a detectable label or isolatable label.

Claim 24. (currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the detectable label or isolatable label is selected from the group consisting of: a fluorescent label, a radioactive label, a paramagnetic particle, a chemoluminescent label, an enzymatic label ~~that is detectable by virtue of a secondary enzymatic reaction~~, and a label that is detectable by virtue of binding to a molecule.

Claim 25. (currently amended) The method of claim 23 ~~or 24~~, wherein the step of recovering cells bound to agent-maternal antibody complexes comprises detecting the label and separating ~~obtaining~~ a fraction comprising the label.

Claim 26. (original) The method according to claim 25, wherein the detectable label or isolatable label is a fluorescent label and wherein the step of recovering cells bound by agent-maternal antibody complexes comprises performing fluorescence activated cell sorting.

Claim 27. (original) The method of claim 25, wherein the detectable label or isolatable label is a paramagnetic particle and wherein the step of recovering cells bound by agent-maternal antibody complexes comprises exposing the cells bound by agent-maternal antibody complexes to a magnet.

Claim 28. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16 ~~to 27~~, wherein the agent is an antibody or fragment of an antibody.

Claim 29. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claims 16 ~~to 27~~, wherein the agent is a polypeptide that binds to an immunoglobulin.

Claim 30. (original) The method of claim 29, wherein the polypeptide binds to any class of human antibody.

Claim 31. (canceled)

Claim 32. (original) A method of enriching fetal cells from a sample of cells obtained from maternal blood, the method comprising exposing cells in the sample to maternal antibodies and recovering fetal cell-maternal antibody complexes, wherein the maternal antibodies comprise maternally produced antibody specific for paternally-inherited fetal antigens.

Claim 33. (original) The method according to claim 32, wherein the maternal antibodies are prepared by a process comprising dissociation of antibodies from a complex with a soluble HLA antigen and/or an anti-idiotypic antibody.

Claim 34. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of~~ claim~~s 31 to~~ 33 wherein the step of recovering the fetal cell-maternal antibody complexes from the sample is performed by contacting the complex with an agent capable of binding to a maternal antibody in said complex and recovering cells bound by agent-maternal antibody complexes.

Claims 35-46 (canceled)

Claim 47. Isolated fetal cells ~~when~~ obtained by a process comprising ~~performing~~ the method ~~according to any one~~ of claim 34 ~~1 to 46~~.

Claims 48-57. (canceled)